

SUPPLEX LIBELLUS VALACHORUM, OR THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE OF THE ROMANIANS IN TRANSYLVANIA DURING THE 18TH CENTURY. By *D. Prodan*. Translated by *Mary Lăzărescu*. Bucharest: Publishing House of the Academy of the Socialist Republic of Romania, 1971. 476 pp. Lei 33.

Here is a brilliant and cogent explanation of the Transylvanian Rumanians' petition, *Supplex Libellus Valachorum*, which was submitted to Emperor Leopold II in 1791. Professor David Prodan's monograph is a translation of the second Rumanian edition of 1967; the first edition appeared in 1948.

The *Supplex* demanded the political emancipation of the Rumanians in Transylvania and was, according to Prodan, the Rumanians' "most important political act" in the eighteenth century. In support of this contention the author surveys the petition's antecedents in chapters on the ecclesiastical union with Rome, the precursory role of Inocențiu Micu, the era of enlightened despotism in Austria, and the peasant revolt of Horia. He also reviews, in brief, Transylvanian developments down to the revolutionary manifestations of 1848 in order to show the impact of the *Supplex* on the subsequent evolution of Rumanian political thought and action.

To justify the demands of 1791 for liberty and equality, both the framers of the *Supplex* and the author of this monograph emphasize the antiquity and continuity of the Rumanians in Transylvania. No longer was the Rumanian nationality to be merely "admitted" to the established society of Magyars, Germans, and Szeklers; nor was Rumanian Orthodoxy to be denied the status of a "received" religion alongside Roman Catholicism, Calvinism, Lutheranism, and Unitarianism. In the past, Rumanians had enjoyed equality with the other peoples of Transylvania; therefore it was to the authority of Clio that the Rumanians appealed for a restoration of the old order. The claim to equality was also advocated on the grounds that the Rumanians were more numerous and had greater financial and military obligations than the other nationalities of the principality. Prodan concludes that the *Supplex* constituted more of an evolutionary program of reform than a call to revolutionary action. On the one hand, the *Supplex* failed to demand the emancipation of the peasantry, which had been suggested earlier by Micu. On the other hand, it included a harbinger in the demand for proportional representation of Rumanians in the government; this was more of a claim to supremacy than to equality owing to the superior number of Rumanians in Transylvania.

In the annex of this study is the Latin text of the *Supplex* together with an English translation. The usefulness of the former is circumscribed by the author's emendations; the text has been altered to conform with modern orthography, punctuation, and capitalization. Such editing was warranted, in part, because of the impossibility of identifying the original draft of the *Supplex*; Prodan gives us the version which was read in the Transylvanian Diet and presented to the emperor.

Prodan's panorama is vast; so too is his research. Unfortunately a cumbersome English translation and typographical errors make reading this book both difficult and, at times, misleading. In addition, the chapters are uneven in quality: there is, for example, a probing chapter on Micu and a more superficial one on the Enlightenment in France. These reservations do not diminish the fact, however, that this is a scholarly and perceptive interpretation of the history of the Transylvanian Rumanians. It may be read with profit in conjunction with Keith Hitchins's *Rumanian National Movement in Transylvania, 1780–1849* (1969). These are valuable

works which fully deserve the attention of serious students of East European history.

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ORIGINILE ROMANTISMULUI ROMÂNESC. By *Paul Cornea*. Bucharest: Editura Minerva, 1972. 759 pp.

Paul Cornea, professor of modern literature at the University of Bucharest, is the author of a number of studies on the origins of Rumanian Romanticism; and he has now given the topic monographic treatment in the present volume. It is not only the most thorough study of the topic but also the one which deals with it most comprehensively within its European framework. Methodologically the book follows the tradition of the history of ideas as represented in the works of Paul Hazard in comparative history, or of Daniel Mornet in his invaluable study of the intellectual origins of the French Revolution. It is a full and well-documented study which extends in important areas the work already done in the history of Rumanian literature by Dumitru Popovici in *Literatura Română in Secolul Luminilor (Rumanian Literature in the Age of the Enlightenment)* and his studies of the Romantic epoch. If the former book placed the Rumanian Enlightenment in its European, and especially French, context, the latter marked out lines of future research.

Paul Cornea is a multifaceted interpreter of the origins of Rumanian Romanticism, borrowing for his study of literary ideas the fertile suggestions of historians such as Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloch, and Robert Mandrou as they relate to a period in which the literary and cultural background of a civilization are inseparably interrelated.

The author begins with an indispensable introduction in which he examines the problems of methodology, including the structure of ideas: "The integration of foreign influences with the historical context and their subordination to the transformations of mentality involve not their denial but their affirmation." Through his knowledge of the theoretical framework of world literature the author provides a solid methodological base which guides the reader through the nearly eight hundred pages of the book.

The book is divided into three sections: "The Background, 1780–1821," "The Period of Transition, 1821–1830," and "The Emergence of Romanticism, 1830–1840." This compartmentalization corresponds to the development of Romanticism which traces its origins to the Age of the Enlightenment. It is obvious that in a book called *The Origins of Rumanian Romanticism* the author should devote particular attention to the background of the movement; and Professor Cornea examines diligently the earlier periods of the Enlightenment and the transitional era of 1821 to 1830. He is thus able to emphasize the course of Rumanian literature from Enlightenment to Romanticism, an evolution characterized by the tendency to integrate Rumanian culture with the system of European values. The discussion of the relation between Enlightenment and preromanticism, or classicism and preromanticism, offers a broader base for the understanding of Romanticism. Yet the author does not depart from his original topic. This is a study of the origins of Romanticism in Rumanian culture and not a history of the movement in full flower.

Paul Cornea's informative, erudite, and elegantly written book will remain a fundamental work for the student of the history of ideas, as well as for the student